

### Open Space Land Activity

---

#### Department Overview

The Open Lands Program was created by the County Commission to meet the desire of the community to conserve agricultural and natural resource lands and provide for increased access to public recreation.

In 2000, the voters of Gallatin County passed the first \$10 million Open Space Bond to fund Conservation and Parks programs in the County. In FY 2000, the Commission appointed the Open Lands Board to make recommendations on the granting of funds from the Open Space Bond Fund.

Absent from the 2000 Bond approval was any funding for the administration of the Conservation and Parks programs. To address this issue, the Open Lands Board created the "Open Land" license plate of which the sales go to fund the administrative portion of the Conservation and Parks programs. Twenty-Five (\$25) dollars from the sale of each license plate goes to Gallatin County. The Administrative portion of the Conservation and Parks programs are entirely funded through private contributions from license plates, not tax dollars.

In 2004, the voters of Gallatin County approved a second Open Space Bond authorizing the County to fund an additional \$10 million in projects, for conservation of agricultural and natural resource lands, the conservation of water quality and quantity, and to provide recreational opportunities. The Voters overwhelmingly approved the 2 requests for a total of \$20 million.

The Gallatin County Open Lands Board serves in an advisory capacity to the County Commission by reviewing and making recommendations as to the expenditure of the Open Space Bond funds. The County has sold four bond issues for Open Lands. The first in 2002 was for \$3.8 million. The second sold in 2003 was for \$4.0 million. The sale of \$4.0 million occurred in FY 06 and \$5.0 million in FY 08 leaves a balance of \$2.8 million in bonding authority still remaining.

The Board's goals are to preserve open spaces, agriculture lands, riparian areas, water quality, recreational parks, trails and wildlife corridors. The Board was composed of 15 members appointed by the County Commission, however, in 2014 the bylaws were changed to 9 members to make for a more manageable board and resolve quorum issues.

To date, the Open Lands Program has funded the purchase of conservation easements equaling 50 square miles and purchased three parks and two public access easements.

Additional expenditures from the license plate funds have been used to complete a Comprehensive Park and Trails Plan for all of Gallatin County. The plan covers the future construction, operation and maintenance needs for parks and recreation in the County.

#### Department Goals

- To conserve farm and ranch land.
- To conserve wildlife habitat.
- To protect and preserve the quality and quantity of water resources.
- To preserve scenic resources.
- To manage growth and development.
- To maximize the potential for recreation.

#### Recent Accomplishments

- Programmed two new conservation easement projects.
- Finalized two new conservation easements.
- Over 56 square miles under conservation easement through our program and three parks.

# RECREATION AND OTHER ACTIVITY

## Open Space Land Activity

### Department Budget

Object of Expenditure	Actual FY 2013	Final FY 2014	Actual FY 2014	Request FY 2015	Preliminary FY 2015	Final FY 2015
Personnel	\$ 85,964	\$ 94,275	\$ 90,016	\$ 94,799	\$ 98,529	\$ 98,529
Operations	14,550	578,308	11,517	521,210	517,480	485,032
Debt Service	1,265,589	1,238,086	1,238,735	1,248,987	1,248,987	1,248,987
Capital Outlay	350,000	1,680,435	183,138	1,672,017	1,840,836	1,549,752
Transfers Out	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,716,103</b>	<b>\$ 3,591,104</b>	<b>\$ 1,523,406</b>	<b>\$ 3,537,013</b>	<b>\$ 3,705,832</b>	<b>\$ 3,382,300</b>

#### Budget by Fund Group

General Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Special Revenue Funds	100,514	672,583	101,533	616,009	616,009	583,561
Debt Service Funds	1,265,589	1,238,086	1,238,735	1,248,987	1,248,987	1,248,987
Capital Project Funds	350,000	1,680,435	183,138	1,672,017	1,840,836	1,549,752
Enterprise Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Internal Service Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trust & Agency Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,716,103</b>	<b>\$ 3,591,104</b>	<b>\$ 1,523,406</b>	<b>\$ 3,537,013</b>	<b>\$ 3,705,832</b>	<b>\$ 3,382,300</b>

#### Funding Sources

Tax Revenues	\$ 1,236,885	\$ 1,187,407	\$ 1,175,533	\$ 1,175,115	\$ 1,230,115	\$ 1,232,394
Non-Tax Revenues	124,777	129,906	162,496	108,000	124,891	113,000
Cash Reappropriated	354,441	2,273,791	185,377	2,253,898	2,350,826	2,036,906
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,716,103</b>	<b>\$ 3,591,104</b>	<b>\$ 1,523,406</b>	<b>\$ 3,537,013</b>	<b>\$ 3,705,832</b>	<b>\$ 3,382,300</b>

### Department Personnel

No. of Positions	FT/PT	Title	FTE 2013	FTE 2014	FTE 2015
1	Full-Time	Open Lands Coordinator	1.00	1.00	1.00
0	Part-Time	Administrative Support	0.07	0.07	0.00
1		Total Program	1.07	1.07	1.00

## Open Space Land Activity

---

### 2015 Budget Highlights

#### Personnel

- Operations run on a limited budget by partnering with outside organizations. One additional part time staff is being supplied in conjunction with Planning for Open Lands Board meetings and park planning.

#### Operations

- Operations continue to be funded via license plates with no need of additional Commission funds

#### Capital

- Open Space Bonds funds are beginning to diminish. Numerous projects in the works that are solid land conservation and some public access. Continue to maintain a 4:1 leverage on all of our bond projects.
- Open Space Bond \$1,549,004

### County Commission Goals/Department Response

The County Commission established a set of overarching goals for the County government. Listed below are the goals, followed by the methods by which the Department is striving to fulfill those goals.

#### Align community needs with budgetary decisions

- The community overwhelmingly supported the Open Space programs and the continued leverage of 4 to 1 on every proposal is stretching the public dollar as much as possible.

#### Adhere to long-term plans

- The Open Lands Program is in line with the County Growth Policy and other community and neighborhood plans and zoning districts.

#### Demonstrate Exceptional Customer Service

- Provide an incentive based alternative for landowners.
- Maintain or improve the quality of life for residents and visitors of Gallatin County by conserving important agricultural and natural resource lands and providing increased access to recreation.

#### Serve as a Model for Excellence in Government

- Open Lands Program is self funded through alternative sources requiring no general fund allocations.
- All bond revenue from the first and second authorized \$10 million bond initiatives are matched with funds from outside sources making the value of the local tax dollar spent on land conservation matched 4:1 by outside sources.
- Balance Open Lands Program activities with other County needs and departmental objectives.

#### Improve communication within county government, other jurisdictions and our public

- Begin education and outreach program based on critical landscapes and community important areas that will be used to shape the future direction of land conservation in the County.
- Highlight the opportunities that exist for rural landowners through incentive based planning programs like conservation easements.

#### Be an Employer of Choice and improve employee retention

-

## RECREATION AND OTHER ACTIVITY

### Open Space Land Activity

---

#### Workload Indicators / Performance Measures

<b>Workload Indicators</b>		<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Projected</b>
<b>Indicator</b>		<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>
1.	Easement projects	1	2	2	2
2.	Parks & Recreation projects	0	0	0	0
3.	Bond/Levy Authorization campaign	0	0	0	0
4.	License Plates sold	6,000	4,500	4,500	4,500
5.	Federal Conservation Grants	1	0	1	2
6.	New programs implementation	0	0	0	0

<b>Performance Measures</b>		<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Projected</b>
<b>Measure</b>		<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>
1.	Projects reviewed	2	2	2	2
2.	Projects approved	2	2	2	2
3.	Projects completed	0	2	2	2

#### Comments

As we come near the end of our Open Lands Bond Funds, we will need to assess if we are going to look for a new bond measure to fund the program or if we are going to shift the goals of the program to open space, conservation and recreation.

Additionally we should plan for certain contingencies for city improvement requirements for Oak Street, Ferguson and Vaquero at the Regional Park.